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Letter No. 2365

June 2, 1988

**SPECIAL HAYING
& GRAZING
PROVISIONS**

Counties found to be suffering from drought will be authorized emergency haying and grazing of acreage conservation reserve and conservation use acreage, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Haying and grazing will be allowed for any consecutive five-month period between April 1 and October 31 in counties found to be suffering from a natural disaster occurring in 1988 that has adversely affected pasture and forage crops. The determination of eligible counties will be made on a county-by-county basis. Producers whose counties are designated as eligible for these emergency programs can get further details from their county ASCS office. The haying and grazing provisions will not apply to conservation reserve program acreage.

**BEEF PROMOTION
& RESEARCH TO
CONTINUE**

A large majority of cattle producers and importers who voted in a May 10 national referendum, voted to continue the national beef promotion and research program, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Of the 256,505 valid ballots cast, 202,408 or 78.91 percent favored the program, and 54,097 or 21.09 percent opposed continuing it. Since the majority supported the program, the Cattlemen's Beef Board will continue to collect assessments of \$1 per head on all cattle sold in the U.S. and an equivalent amount on all imported cattle, beef, and beef products.

**TRADE
SURPLUS**

The U.S. posted an agricultural trade surplus of \$1 billion 380 million for March 1988, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This is the fifth straight month of agricultural trade surpluses in excess of \$1 billion and is the largest positive balance since December 1984. The U.S. agricultural trade surplus for fiscal 1988 is expected to climb to \$12 billion 500 million.

**MARCH
EXPORTS**

U.S. agricultural exports for March totaled 14 million 800 thousand tons, valued at \$3 billion 300 million, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This compares to exports of 11 million 400 thousand tons valued at \$2 billion 400 million for March 1987 and is the highest monthly figure since December 1984. U.S. agricultural exports to date for fiscal year 1988 totaled 77 million 300 thousand tons, valued at \$17 billion 800 million. This represents an increase of 13 million 600 tons in volume, and \$3 billion 300 million in value from the same period last year.

EXPORT FORECAST
FOR 1988

The forecast for U.S. agricultural exports for fiscal year 1988 was raised by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to 145½ million tons valued at \$33½ billion. The increase in value results from larger-than-expected exports of animal products, horticultural products and soybeans, while the volume increase primarily reflects improved prospects for wheat, feeds and fodders, and soybeans. Animal products are now forecast at a record high \$5 billion 600 million, due to stronger-than-expected demand for hides and skins, red meats and animal fats.

EXPORTS -
FISCAL 1987
AND 1988

Compared with fiscal 1987, the fiscal 1988 exports are expected to rise by 16 million tons, valued at \$5 billion 600 million, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Most of the volume increase stems from larger grain shipments as the export Enhancement Program and tighter competitor supplies boost the U.S. share of world markets. The export value has been raised to account for the increased volume and higher-than-expected prices for grains, oilseeds and cotton.

AG IMPORTS

The March forecast for U.S. agricultural imports was raised to \$21 billion from \$20 billion 500 million as forecast in February. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, agricultural imports for March totaled \$1 billion 950 million, up \$35 million or 2 percent from March 1987, and up \$24 million or 1 percent from February 1988. Cumulative agricultural imports to date exceed last year's level by \$321 million, or 3 percent. In volume, agricultural imports are virtually unchanged from last year. The decline in the value of the dollar is pushing up the total import bill.

CCC LOAN
INTEREST
RATE

Commodity loans disbursed in June by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation will carry a 7-1/4 percent interest rate. The new rate is up from May's 6-7/8 percent.

COTTON
SITUATION &
OUTLOOK

U.S. cotton exports are likely to fall from this season's level because of increased foreign supplies and weaker foreign mill demand in importing countries, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The initial U.S. cotton export forecast is 6 million bales, down nearly a tenth, which implies a reduction in the U.S. share of world cotton trade. Next season, the U.S. could capture about 26 percent share, compared to 28 percent in 1987/88. World cotton consumption is expected to stabilize at 82 million bales, as weaker economic growth slows demand and users reduce inventories.

PRICES RECEIVED
INDEX UP 4 POINTS

The May all farm products index of prices received by farmers increased 4 points, or 3.1 percent, from April, to 134 percent of its January-December 1977 average, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Higher prices for hogs, soybeans, oranges, and broilers were partially offset by lower prices for tomatoes, onions, milk and upland cotton. The index was 6 points, or 4.7 percent above a year ago.

NEW RICE
HAS \$2 BILLION
IMPACT

A semi-dwarf long grain rice named Lemont, developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, has had economic impact of more than \$2 billion in Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi, because of lower production costs. Released in 1983, Lemont has almost single-handedly kept U.S. rice competitive as an export to world markets because it is significantly less expensive to produce.

ANAPLASMOSIS...
QUICK DIAGNOSIS

A few purple spots on specially treated paper now warn cattle producers of anaplasmosis, a disease that costs about \$300 million a year in losses and disease control. Scientists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Washington State University developed the new test, called a DNA probe. It's the first test to diagnose anaplasmosis accurately and quickly in cattle and ticks. It takes only a few hours compared to as many as 40 days now needed. And the probe can pinpoint levels of infection in cows and individual ticks without having to infect animals. (For details, contact Willard L. Goff and David Stiller, Pullman, WA 99164-7030. Phone: (509) 335-3179.)

FROM OUR RADIO

AGRICULTURE USA #1618...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) It's summertime and there's more chances of getting food poisoning on that family outing. On this edition of AGRICULTURE USA Brenda Curtis talks with USDA food safety specialist Georgia Stevens about food safety and new consumer buying trends at local supermarket.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1606...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; 1989 Wheat program provisions; New haying and grazing regulations from USDA; Farm families and high health insurance premiums; The disappearing gasoline.

CONSUMER TIME #1098...(Weekly reel of 2½-3 min features) Beef, better than expected; Disability insurance; Food student shortage; 1988 food prices; Versatile vinegar.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Tues, June 7, Weekly weather and crop report; Thurs, June 9, U.S. crop production report; Soviet grain situation; World ag. supply and demand; Fri, June 10, World crop and grain production; World oilseed report; World cotton report. Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. ET each working day.

TELEVISION SERVICE programs, A BETTER WAY, DOWN TO EARTH, AGRICULTURAL UPDATE and SATELLITE NEWS are available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8 as follows:

Thursdays....AG UPDATE/SATELLITE NEWS, 7:30-7:45 p.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

Saturdays....A BETTER WAY, 10:00-10:30 a.m. ET.....Transponder 9X
ORIGINAL DOWN TO EARTH, 10:30-11:00 a.m. ET....Transponder 9X
UPLINK SATELLITE NEWS/AG UPDATE, 11:00-11:15 a.m. ET.....Transponder 9X

Mondays.....A BETTER WAY, 8:00-8:30 a.m. ET.....Transponder 12D
REPEAT DOWN TO EARTH, 8:30-9:00 a.m. ET....Transponder 12D
UPLINK SATELLITE NEWS/AG UPDATE, 9:00-9:15 a.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

A BETTER WAY is also available on The Learning Channel SATCOM 3R, Transponder 2, Audio 6.8 each Thursday at 10:30 a.m. ET.

OFF MIKE

John Hogan, an old timer in broadcasting and in more recent years a Foreign Service Officer, died in Honolulu on May 27, at age 70. While a newscaster in Portland back in the 1940's, he started an organization for Radio News Editors, that evolved into today's RTNDA...Layne Beaty, retired USDA R&TV, went to Las Vegas to interview Leon Lichtenfeld for the Broadcast Pioneers Library. Lichtenfeld, age 91, was a musician for WGN, Chicago, when that station was broadcasting from the Drake Hotel. He played the cello with a small music group that was on standby all day, to fill air time after games and other events. He carried his cello with him since somebody stole the group's piano from the studio. Today, he stays tuned all day to WGN via cable, and can tell you all about the Cubs and the Chicago weather, but isn't up on Las Vegas news. He also has a closet full of WGN caps and jackets. How's that for loyalty?...Art Sechrest, WJBC/Farm Radio 111., the

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new historian for NAFB, is coming to Washington to visit the National Agricultural Library. It's one of the places being considered as a possible depository for NAFB historical material.

Margaret T. Desatnik
MARGARET T. DESATNIK, Acting Chief
Radio and Television Division